

A RUSH TO DEATH IS NEVER
NECESSARY

HON. MAJOR R. OWENS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 23, 2000

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, Gary Graham (Shaka Sankofa) was exterminated by the State of Texas yesterday, June 22, 2000. He was killed with a lethal injection despite that fact that there are many reasons to doubt the guilty verdict which placed him on death row. Gary Graham clearly deserved more time alive to investigate fully all of the irregularities surrounding his trial. Since death is irreversible and human life is sacred, time should not have been rushed. The American people and their powerful State Governors should fully note recent developments which indicate that a large percentage of the people on death row are probably not guilty. Gross inadequacies in the criminal justice system are generating deadly mistakes. In my opinion there are too many people who approve of the death penalty as a just punishment for certain crimes. At the same time almost no American citizens approve of the execution of innocent victims. Gary Graham was the 222nd person executed in Texas since the state resumed capital punishment in 1982. He was the 135th person executed during the present Governor's tenure. Mr. Speaker, the Rap poem below summarizes this disgracefully sad situation.

CREDO OF THE EXECUTIONER

When in doubt
Just let them die
Ambitious Governors
Never cry
Witness eyes
Never lie
Bargain basement lawyers
Refuse to pry
Treat the truth
Like a spy
Voters yell for blood
Compassion is swept away
In a primitive flood
Savages satisfied
Delighted that so many
In great Texas
Have already died
When in doubt
Kill them first
Then publicly pray
Moral indignation
Soon fades away.

RECOGNIZING THE CHINATOWN
HEALTH CLINIC

HON. NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 23, 2000

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with great honor to recognize the achievements of an outstanding organization that provides excellent services in New York's 12th Congressional District. The Chinatown Health Clinic (CHC), located in the Lower East Side of Manhattan, was selected as one of the winners of this year's "Models That Work" competition sponsored by the U.S. Department of

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

Health and Human Services, for their Primary Care Mental Health Bridge Program (PCMH).

The Chinatown Health Clinic is a non-profit, community based health care facility established in 1971 to provide health care services to the New York City Asian community. CHC provide access to quality and culturally sensitive health care and health education services. It advocates on behalf of the Asian community who, due to cultural, language, education or financial barriers, may not have access to basic health care services or health education activities.

The Bridge Program was created by the Chinatown Health Clinic in response to the significant barriers to delivering mental health to the Asian American community. CHC has a 27 year history of providing bilingual and bicultural outpatient primary cares services and it contributes to the Bridge Program by conducting educational outreach activities in the community about mental health, substance abuse, and providing concrete services to patients who may need financial assistance or social services.

As you can see, the recognition made to the Bridge Program by the Department of Health and Human Services is indeed well deserved. I commend the Chinatown Health Clinic for its hard work and continuous commitment with the Asian community and would like to personally congratulate them on this significant achievement.

HAPPY 50TH ANNIVERSARY TO
DANIEL AND BERNITA O'CONNER

HON. JAMES A. BARCIA

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 23, 2000

Mr. BARCIA. Mr. Speaker, throughout our lives we receive countless blessings and among these, the greatest gift is that of love. Today, I am proud to be able to pay tribute to two people who have cherished this gift and demonstrated their love and devotion to one another each and every day over the past fifty years.

On June 24th, two extraordinary people, Daniel and Bernita O'Conner are celebrating their golden wedding anniversary. Together with their children Patrick, Daniel and Erin, their grandchildren Danielle, Caitlin and Meaghan, and a number of friends that their years of work and community involvement have brought them, they will celebrate this most special of days.

After meeting at Sacred Heart Church in Kawkawlin, Michigan, these two young people soon fell in love. They were married on June 24, 1950 in Essexville, Michigan, and ever since that day, Daniel and Bernita have shared a wonderful life together. They have found happiness as lifelong companions. As nurturing parents, tireless workers, selfless community leaders and lifelong Democrats, the O'Connors truly represent all that is right in this country.

Daniel and Bernita are not only dedicated to each other and their family, but they are also dedicated to their church. They have always been active in the Catholic Church, including

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several parishes in my district. Holy Trinity in Bay City, St. John the Evangelist in Essexville and Sacred Heart in Kawkawlin, have been fortunate to have the O'Connors as members. Their commitment to their faith and strong family values makes them excellent role models for everyone who crosses their paths.

Mr. Speaker, in these days of disintegrating families, it is reassuring to see a strong, stable marriage built on love, respect and trust. Their lives together have been a blessing to each other, and an inspiration for those of us fortunate enough to know them. I urge you and all of our colleagues to join me in wishing Daniel and Bernita O'Conner the happiest of anniversaries, on this their fiftieth, and many more to come. May God's continued blessing be upon them and their beautiful family.

TRIBUTE TO STATE SENATOR
ROBERT LAMUTT'S WORK ON E-
SIGNATURE LEGISLATION

HON. BOB BARR

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 23, 2000

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to honor a leader from the Seventh District of Georgia State Senator Robert Lamutt. Senator Lamutt is a true leader in providing state regulations on electronic commerce, commonly known as "e-commerce."

The Internet has experienced phenomenal growth since its inception. It has become a tool with which millions daily access more information than in any single library, communicate with friends, or purchase goods from retailers located all over the world. As e-commerce continues to boom, it has become imperative to enact federal and state legislation that will enable, enhance, and protect future Internet users.

The greatest barrier to regulating electronic transactions has been the lack of consistent rules governing the use of electronic signatures ("e-signatures"). For the past two years, the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Law, an organization comprised of e-commerce experts, has been working to develop a uniform system for the use of e-signatures for all 50 states. Their product, the Uniform Electronic Transaction Act, is in the final stages of review. When the UETA is completed, it will be used by state legislatures to enact the legislation and establish the uniformity necessary for the interstate use of e-signatures.

As a Georgian, I am proud these new standards were in part crafted from Georgia Senate Bill 62, signed into law by our Governor on April 19, 2000. This legislation grants "e-transactions" the legitimacy of traditional, paper-based transactions. Senator Robert Lamutt, R-Marietta, was the bill's primary sponsor. Senator Lamutt's insight and understanding helped define one of the more difficult aspects of the bill. Instead of focusing on limiting the scope of competitive solutions, the Georgia bill looked at defining e-signatures from a minimalist perspective. The language clarifies that just because something is done electronically, it is still legally binding. It was

this "real" solution to a complex issue that enabled the UETA drafting committee to move toward its final draft.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Georgia Senator Lamutt's pioneering work on this issue. He is a tremendous asset to Marietta, the State of Georgia and indeed, the nation. I am most proud of his approach in creating greater uniformity in electronic transactions, electronic records and electronic signatures. This insight will inevitably lead to greater, legally binding e-commerce, and will help us in the Congress as we endeavor to develop federal legislation regarding this important aspect of interstate commerce, and as H.R. 1714, the e-signature bill passed by the House on June 14, 2000, moves forward.

REAL SOLUTIONS TO VIOLENT CRIME

HON. DAVE WELDON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 23, 2000

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, the immediate reaction of the advocates of additional gun control to violence we see in our communities is to call for new, more restrictive gun controls on law-abiding Americans. The American people are smarter than that. In fact recent survey's have shown that the American people don't believe additional gun control laws passed by the Congress will reduce crime. The American people know that criminals, by definition, are not law abiding citizens. Criminals are law-breakers and if they are not willing to abide by laws against murder and robbery, they are not going to comply with a new law that would require that they go down to the local police station and register their firearms. To believe that they would do such a thing is lunacy.

Mr. Speaker, the solution to our problems is two part. To address the near-term problem of violent crime we need to lock up criminals, including those who use guns in the commission of a crime. Examples of where this has been initiated in various states shows that this works. Second, we need to emphasize in our society that life has value, that life is not expendable.

Many Americans may recall just a few months ago, the stand-off between police and Joseph C. Palczynski, the Maryland man who killed four people and held three others hostage in Baltimore this past March. Let's take a look at this guy's criminal record, and ask whether or not this man should have been out on the streets. (According to Wash Times)

In 1988 he was convicted of battery and sentenced to two years probation. In 1989, he assaulted a 16 year-old girl and was subsequently sentenced to four years in jail. However, he was somehow let out and in 1991 he beat up his girlfriend, while she attended high school. In 1992, following another domestic violence complaint by a girlfriend, and after holding police at bay for 16 hours, he was arrested on two outstanding warrants including a weapons violation charge. In 1995 he received a 10 year suspended sentence for the battery of another girlfriend's father.

On March 4, 2000, he was arrested on assault charges in a domestic-violence incident and released the next day on a \$7,500 bond. Just 2 days later, on March 7, he murdered three people with a gun bought by a friend and on March 8 murdered another person. On March 17-21, he held police at bay while holding a family hostage.

AL GORE and his liberal friends in Congress have a solution to prevent this crime in the future: gun registration.

The American people are not stupid. They recognize this as an opportunist's attempt to exploit this situation to advance their anti-Second Amendment agenda. Their solution has no relation to the crime and is no solution.

Common sense says this guy should never have been out on the streets. The real solution is to ensure that these types of criminals are kept behind bars, not impose new restrictions on the Second Amendment rights of law abiding citizens.

Let's turn to another tragedy, for which liberals have proposed as a solution, additional restrictions on the Second Amendment. It is important that we look at the circumstances and see if their solution would have addressed the problem.

In early March, a six year old boy brought a gun to school and shot a six year old little girl. This is an unspeakable tragedy and my heart goes out to the little girl's family. No one should have their little girl taken from them in a senseless act of violence. At its root, this tragedy is a reflection of moral decay in our society. It reflects a lack of value on human life in American society today.

As we as a nation consider a response to this tragedy, it is important to look at the specific events that led to this tragedy. The six year old who shot his classmate was living with his uncle in a crack house. The boy's father is in jail for a burglary charge. ABC's Nightline indicates that the boy's father had at least five children by four different women. The mother had been evicted from her apartment. The gun the boy used was sitting out in a bedroom, underneath some sheets and was a stolen gun. It has been reported that the gun may have been traded for drugs. The father described his son as enjoying violent movies and television shows. And, teachers described the boy as aggressive and a bully. They also stated that he had been suspended from school twice, once for fighting and a second time for stabbing a little girl with a pencil.

Mr. Clinton has already laid the blame for this tragedy at the feet of Congress for not approving his gun control proposals. The reality is his gun proposals would have done nothing to stop this tragedy, and he refuses to admit that the problem in this case runs much deeper into the soul of this individual, his relatives, and our nation. Mr. Clinton's statement is a shameful exploitation of this tragedy to secure support for legislation that would have done nothing to prevent this tragedy. Too often the media and politicians point to the need for additional gun control as the "solution" because they do not have any other answers or lack the will to consider the root causes that lead to these tragedies.

It appears that this child was raised in a culture of violence with little respect for the rights of others, including the right to life. The blame

for this tragedy rests primarily with the parents who failed to teach this child to respect life and others. Also, the peddlers of violence in our society are also partly to blame. Professor William Allen, at Michigan State University, said it best when he stated, "When you have 6 year olds shooting 6 year olds, you are not talking about crimes anymore, you're talking about moral decay."

We are dealing with a cultural meltdown. Many are proposing simple, quick fix solutions. However, we must recognize that there are no quick fixes to such a tragedy. At the root of this tragedy is a corruption of the heart and soul of our nation. We must work to restore a value on life.

We must counter the message that some adults in our society are sending is that some life is expendable. Children learn from our actions. Not only do many of our movies, music lyrics, and video games portray life as expendable, but many of the actions of adults in our society convey this message as well. When our children see adults, including political leaders, advocating the acceptance of drugs, euthanasia, partial-birth abortions, and abortion on demand, adults devalue life and teach our young people that life is expendable.

Today, we must ask ourselves if we will have the courage to confront the root causes of violence. I am once again reminded of the comments made by Mother Teresa in 1994, when she stated "Our children depend on us for everything—their health, their nutrition, their security, their coming to love and know God. For all of this, they look to us with trust, hope, and expectation. But often father and mother are so busy they have no time for their children . . . So their children go to the streets and get involved in drugs or other things. We are talking of love of the child, which is where love and peace must begin." We as a nation must heed this advice.

We must work to renew in our society a respect for the value that human life has. Only if society places a higher value on life will we be able to make serious progress in reducing the violence in our society.

DEBT REDUCTION RECONCILIATION ACT OF 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. GARY G. MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 20, 2000

Mr. GARY MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4601 the "Debt Reduction Reconciliation Act of 2000." It is time for the U.S. Congress and the President to start living the way American families do.

When a family owes money on a credit card, loan, or car, they pay a price to borrow that money—an interest rate. Interest rates make the purchase made by that credit card or loan or the car more expensive; hence, there is a financial incentive to pay the debt off as quickly as possible. Unfortunately, it seems that too many members of Congress and this President have forgotten what interest rates and debt really mean.

Our refusal to be mindful of simple accounting methods has resulted in the rapid accumulation of surplus revenues in the U.S. Treasury